



**NEW SAFETY FEATURE . . .** A new self-locking gate for heavy-duty crane hooks has been developed at the Torrance Works of U. S. Steel's Columbia-Genève Steel Division. Above, Thomas Ramskill, left, open hearth maintenance foreman who designed the gate, and E. J. Ahlstrom, supervisor of safety, check the gate's locking mechanism on the 10-ton open hearth stripping crane hook. Placed in service several months ago on several of the mill's cranes, the self-locking gate has proved to be safer and more efficient than locking mechanisms previously used at Torrance Works.

**Slight Wounds May Start Tetanus Germs Working, Often Prove Fatal**

By ROY O. GILBERT, Health Officer, L.A. County Health Department

Tetanus is a comparatively rare disease in this country, which is fortunate because it is so often fatal. As a matter of fact, once the disease develops the chance for recovery is only about 50 per cent.

Both adults and children may get the disorder, although it does occur most commonly in school-age youngsters, probably because they are so likely to suffer the kind of injuries that may result in tetanus.

The disease is caused by the tetanus bacilli. These germs may be found in dirt, soil, or dust, and on almost any object. Consequently, they may also be found on the skin.

An injury need not be severe to result in tetanus. Cases have even occurred following insect-bites. A medical study reported in the May 1957 issue of Medical Clinics of North America reveals that about 50 per cent of patients with the disease had wounds so trivial that medical care was not even considered.

When tetanus organisms contaminate a wound and are sealed off from air, they produce a toxin that permeates the body. Symptoms of illness usually appear in from seven to 10 days, although they may appear in less time, or be delayed for a number of weeks.

There are two main (or clinical) types of the disease. One is fatal and progressive in the

majority of cases; the other most always occurs in children and is generally mild with ultimate recovery.

The most characteristic symptom of tetanus is called "trismus," which simply means rigidity of the jaws (lockjaw). This condition, however, may occur in other disorders as well.

There is no specific cure for tetanus. Despite any treatment given, the majority of adult patients die. However, therapy to limit progression of the disease has improved over the years, and mortality rates are decreasing.

There are two substances available that can prevent tetanus (antitoxin and toxoid), and both are effective. Tetanus antitoxin is used in those cases where individuals are injured and are not—or it cannot be determined if they are—actively immunized against the disease.

The protection provided by the antitoxin is practically immediate, but it lasts only two to four weeks. Another disadvantage of the antitoxin is that many people are sensitive to the horse serum and allergic reactions may be severe, or even fatal in some cases.

The results of the administration of tetanus toxoid are much more satisfactory. The toxoid provides an active immunity and upward reaction to it are rare. Furthermore, it is 99.9 per cent effective.

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